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National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation



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Donald Trump indicted; 1st ex-president charged with crime

By MICHAEL R. SISAK,
ERIC TUCKER and
COLLEEN LONG
Associated Press
NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump has been indicted by a Manhattan grand jury, prosecutors and defense lawyers said Thursday, making him the first former U.S. president to face a criminal charge and jolting his bid to retake the White House next year. The charges center on payments made during the 2016 presidential campaign to silence claims of an extramarital sexual encounter. They mark an extraordinary development after years of investigations into Trump's business, political and personal dealings. The indictment injects a local district attorney's office into the heart of a national presidential race and ushers in criminal proceedings in a city that the ex-president for decades called home.



Adult film actress Stormy Daniels arrives for the opening of the adult entertainment fair Venus in Berlin, Oct. 11, 2018.

Continued on Page 2

Associated Press



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Donald Trump indicted; 1st ex-president charged with crime

Continued from Front

Arriving at a time of deep political divisions, the charges are likely to reinforce rather than reshape dueling perspectives of those who see accountability as long overdue and those who, like Trump, feel the Republican is being targeted for political purposes by a Democratic prosecutor.

Trump, who has denied any wrongdoing and has repeatedly assailed the investigation, called the indictment "political persecution" and predicted it would damage Democrats in 2024. In a statement confirming the charges, defense lawyers Susan Necheles and Joseph Tacopina said Trump "did not commit any crime. We will vigorously fight this political prosecution in court."

A spokesman for the Manhattan district attorney's office confirmed the indictment and said prosecutors had reached out to Trump's defense team to arrange a surrender. A person familiar with the matter, who was not authorized to discuss sealed proceedings, said the surrender was expected to happen next week. District Attorney Alvin Bragg left his office Thursday evening without commenting.

The case centers on well-chronicled allegations from a period in 2016 when Trump's celebrity past collided with his political ambitions. Prosecutors scrutinized money paid to porn actor Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal, whom he feared would go public with claims that they had extramarital sexual encounters with him.

The timing of the indictment appeared to come as a surprise to Trump campaign officials following news reports that criminal charges was likely weeks away. The former president was at Mar-a-Lago, his Florida estate, on Thursday and had filmed an interview with a conservative commentator earlier in the day. For a man whose presiden-



President Donald Trump gestures as he arrives to speak at a rally in Washington, Jan. 6, 2021.

cy was defined by one obliterated norm after another, the indictment presents yet another never-before-seen spectacle. It will require a former president, and current hopeful, to simultaneously fight for his freedom and his political future while also fending off potentially more perilous legal threats, including investigations into attempts by him and his allies to undo the 2020 election as well into as the hoarding of hundreds of classified documents.

In fact, New York until recently had been seen as an unlikely contender to be the first place to prosecute Trump, who continues to face long-running investigations in Atlanta and Washington that could also result in charges. Unlike those inquiries, the Manhattan case concerns conduct by Trump that occurred before he became president and is unrelated to much-publicized efforts to overturn a presidential election.

As he seeks to reassert control of the Republican Party and stave off a slew of one-time allies who are seeking or are likely to oppose him for the presidential nomination, the indictment sets the stage for an unprecedented scene — a former president having his fingerprints and mug shot taken, and then facing arraignment and possibly a criminal tri-

al. For security reasons, his booking is expected to be carefully choreographed to avoid crowds inside or outside the courthouse.

In bringing the charges, Bragg, the Manhattan district attorney, is embracing an unusual case that had been investigated by two previous sets of prosecutors, both of which declined to take the politically explosive step of seeking Trump's indictment.

In the weeks leading up to the indictment, Trump, who is seeks to reassert control of the Republican Party and railed about the investigation on social media and urged supporters to protest on his behalf, prompting tighter security around the Manhattan criminal courthouse.

The fate of the hush-money investigation seemed uncertain until word got out in early March that Bragg had invited Trump to testify before a grand jury, a signal that prosecutors were close to bringing charges. Trump's attorneys declined the invitation, but a lawyer closely allied with the former president briefly testified in an effort to undercut the credibility of Trump's former lawyer and fixer Michael Cohen.

Late in the 2016 presidential campaign, Cohen paid Daniels \$130,000 to keep her silent about what she says was a sexual encoun-

ter with Trump a decade earlier after they met at a celebrity golf tournament. Cohen was then reimbursed by Trump's company, the Trump Organization, which also rewarded the lawyer with bonuses and extra payments logged internally as legal expenses. Over several months, Cohen said, the company paid him \$420,000.

Earlier in 2016, Cohen had also arranged for the publisher of the supermarket tabloid the National Enquirer to pay Playboy model Karen McDougal \$150,000 to squelch her story of a Trump affair in a journalistically dubious practice known as "catch-and-kill." The payments to the women were intended to buy secrecy, but they backfired almost immediately as details of the arrangements leaked to the news media. Federal prosecutors in New York ultimately charged Cohen in 2018 with violating federal campaign finance laws, arguing that the payments amounted to impermissible help to Trump's presidential campaign. Cohen pleaded guilty to those charges and unrelated tax evasion counts and served time in federal prison.

Trump was implicated in court filings as having knowledge of the arrangements, but U.S. prosecutors at the time balked at bring-

ing charges against him. The Justice Department has a longtime policy that it is likely unconstitutional to prosecute a sitting president in federal court.

Bragg's predecessor as district attorney, Cyrus Vance Jr., then took up the investigation in 2019. While that probe initially focused on the hush money payments, Vance's prosecutors moved on to other matters, including an examination of Trump's business dealings and tax strategies.

Vance ultimately charged the Trump Organization and its chief financial officer with tax fraud related to fringe benefits paid to some of the company's top executives.

The hush money matter became known around the D.A.'s office as the "zombie case," with prosecutors revisiting it periodically but never opting to bring charges.

Bragg saw it differently. After the Trump Organization was convicted on the tax fraud charges in December, he brought fresh eyes to the well-worn case, hiring longtime white-collar prosecutor Matthew Colangelo to oversee the probe and convening a new grand jury.

Trump has long decried the Manhattan investigation as "the greatest witch hunt in history." He has also lashed out at Bragg, calling the prosecutor, who is Black, racist against white people. The criminal charges in New York are the latest salvo in a profound schism between Trump and his hometown — a reckoning for a one-time favorite son who grew rich and famous building skyscrapers, hobnobbing with celebrities and gracing the pages of the city's gossip press.

Trump, who famously riffed in 2016 that he "could stand in the middle of Fifth Avenue and shoot somebody" and "wouldn't lose voters," now faces a threat to his liberty or at least his reputation in a borough where more than 75% of voters — many of them potential jurors — went against him in the last election. □

Judge's ruling undercuts U.S. health law's preventive care

By PAUL J. WEBER

Associated Press

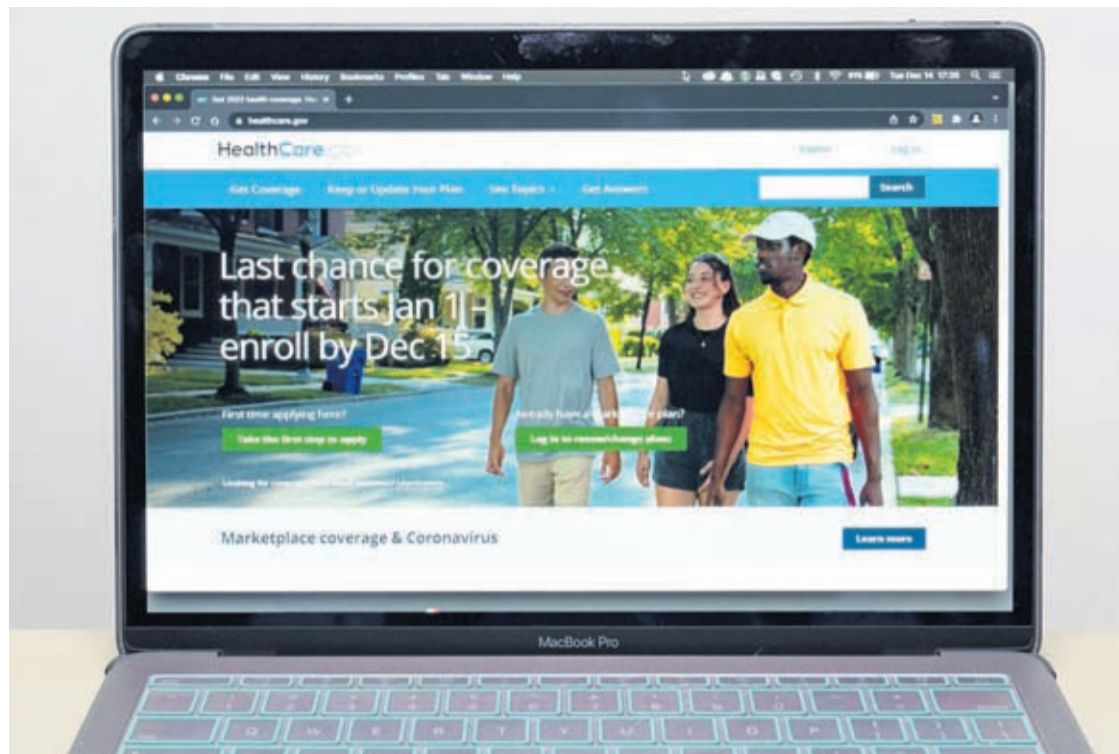
AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — A federal judge in Texas who previously ruled to dismantle the Affordable Care Act struck down a narrower but key part of the nation's health law Thursday that requires most insurers to cover preventive services that include screenings for cancer, diabetes and mental health.

Other no-cost services, including HIV screenings, are also impacted under the ruling by U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor that opponents say will jeopardize preventive care for millions of Americans.

Experts cautioned that insurers are unlikely to stop any coverage immediately.

The Biden administration was also expected to appeal and seek a stay of the ruling.

"This is not the potential fatal blow to the ACA like previous court cases, but it would limit a very popular benefit that tens of millions of people use," said Larry Levitt, executive vice president for health policy at the Kaiser Family Foundation.



The healthcare.gov website is seen on Dec. 14, 2021, in Fort Washington, Md.

Associated Press

The decision comes more than four years after O'Connor, a nominee of former President George W. Bush, ruled that the entire health care law also known as "Obamacare" was unconstitutional. The U.S. Supreme Court overturned that ruling.

This time O'Connor blocked only the requirement that most insurers cover a range

of preventive care including screenings for multiple types of cancer siding with plaintiffs who include a conservative activist in Texas and a Christian dentist who opposed mandatory coverage for contraception and an HIV prevention treatment on religious grounds.

The requirements for coverage are driven by rec-

ommendations by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, which is made up of volunteers. O'Connor ruled that enforcing the recommendations was "unlawful" and a violation of the Constitution's Appointment Clause, which lays out how government officials can be appointed.

Dr. Michael Barry, chairman of the federal task force,

said in a statement following the ruling that people with low incomes have been able to get services they need as care has expanded over the past decade because of the law.

"Fundamentally, people across the country deserve the opportunity to receive these important preventive services that have been proven to help them live longer and healthier lives," Barry said.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment on the ruling. The Biden administration had told the court that the outcome of the case "could create extraordinary upheaval in the United States' public health system."

More than 20 states, mostly controlled by Democrats, had urged O'Connor against a sweeping ruling that would do away with the preventive care coverage requirement entirely. The ruling applies to recommendations made by the task force after March 2010, when the Affordable Care Act was enacted. □

Gun injuries in U.S. surged during pandemic, CDC study shows

By MIKE STOBBE

AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — For every American killed by gunfire, an estimated two or more survive, often with terrible injuries a fact that public health experts say is crucial to understanding the full impact of guns on society.

A new government study highlights just how violent America's recent past has been by showing a surge in gunfire injuries during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the number of people fatally shooting each other and themselves also increased.

The number of people injured by gunfire was nearly 40% higher in 2020 and 2021, compared with 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

said in a study published Thursday. In 2022, gun injuries tapered off, but were still 20% higher than before the pandemic.

Gun injuries rose similarly for men and women over the past three years, while the largest proportional increase occurred among children younger than 15, a subset that remains a small fraction of the overall problem.

Experts say the CDC gun injury study, which uses data from hospital emergency departments, helps provide a more comprehensive picture of gun violence in America than simply measuring homicides and suicides.

"Hospitals are a great place to keep the pulse on who is being shot, and when and where," said

Catherine Barber, a senior injury researcher at Harvard University's school of public health.

The CDC study results came from more than 2,200 U.S. hospital emergency departments, which represent the bulk of the nation's ERs, said Thomas Simon, one of the authors of the new study.

The study suggests that the number of gunshot-related ER visits at hospitals in the study rose from around 50,000 in 2019 to more than 72,000 in 2020. Because more than a quarter of U.S. hospital emergency departments were not involved in the study, the actual number is likely significantly higher.

Experts believe a variety of factors contributed to the pandemic surge in gun

violence, including a rise in guns purchased, more time spent inside homes where guns are present and mental health struggles stemming from social isolation and economic hardships.

The CDC study shows a rise in gun injuries around mid-March 2020, after a pandemic emergency was declared and lockdowns and other measures were put into place. □



The owner of a shooting range, prepares to load bullets in his 9mm semi-automatic handgun for a demonstration, Thursday, June 23, 2022, in New York.

Associated Press

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By **MIKE STOBBE**
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The CDC study shows a rise in gun injuries around

mid-March 2020, after a pandemic emergency was declared and lockdowns and other measures were put into place. A sharper jump occurred a couple of months later, in the second half of May, when protests and civil unrest followed the Minneapolis police killing of George Floyd.

While the CDC study did not differentiate between injuries caused by assaults or accidents, other research has shown that about 3 out of 4 gunshot wounds are intentional.

The CDC says more than 45,000 people died from gun-related injuries in the U.S. in 2020, and more than 47,000 in 2021.

The country's gun violence problem was thrust into the national conversation again this week after a shooter killed 3 children and 3 adults at a Christian school in Tennessee; nobody who was shot survived. The shooter was killed by police.

"We are in a week when people are paying attention to this issue again, sadly, after a mass shooting in Nashville" said Nina Vinik, executive director of Project Unloaded, an advocacy group focused on the impact of gun violence on children. "Hopefully this paper will add new data to that conversation." □

Associated Press



In this June 14, 2016, file photo, two people walk on the University of Wyoming campus in Laramie, Wyo.

Associated Press

Suit contests University of Wyoming trans woman in sorority

By **MEAD GRUVER**
Associated Press

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AP) — The nationwide battle over the places where transgender people may belong has flared at the University of Wyoming, where a lawsuit filed by seven sorority members challenges the induction of a transgender woman into their local chapter.

The woman, identified only by the pseudonym "Terry Smith" in the lawsuit filed Monday in U.S. District Court in Cheyenne, made residents of the Kappa Kappa Gamma house uncomfortable in part by sitting on a common-area couch for hours and staring at them without talking, the lawsuit alleges. "One sorority member walked down the hall to take a shower, wearing only a towel. She felt an unsettling presence, turned, and saw Mr. Smith watching her silently," the lawsuit alleges.

The lawsuit against the national Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, its national council president and Smith claims national sorority officials pressured the local chapter to violate sorority rules, including those for voting to induct new members.

The lawsuit asks for a judge to declare Smith's sorority membership void and to award unspecified damages. The damages should reflect the local chapter's decline in financial stability and donations because of Smith's induction last fall, the lawsuit alleges.

Like Smith, the seven women suing are anonymous, referred to in the lawsuit as Jane Does I-XII.

The national Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority based in Dublin, Ohio, didn't return email and phone messages seeking comment Wednesday and Thursday. Smith did not immediately return an email message Thursday seeking comment. She had no attorney listed in court records. Smith, 21, doesn't live among the 44 women currently residing in the Sorority Row house because of housing commitments elsewhere, according to the lawsuit that identifies Smith as male.

Smith has spent much time at the sorority house, however, including for a slumber party she allegedly did not leave until two hours after promised. The next morning, Smith became "sexually aroused" while watching other pledges change their clothes, the lawsuit alleges.

Smith, who identifies with female pronouns on Twitter, wears women's clothing "only occasionally," has not undergone medical gender transition and identifies as male on a Washington State driver's license even though she legally could have identified on it as female or "X" gender, the lawsuit alleges.

"An adult human male does not become a woman just because he tells others that he has a female 'gender identity' and behaves in what he believes to be a stereotypically female manner," the lawsuit says. □

Canada mass shooting inquiry identifies many police failings

TRURO, Nova Scotia (AP) —

A public inquiry has found widespread failures in how Canada's federal police force responded to the country's worst mass shooting and recommends that the government rethink the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's central role in the country's policing.

In a seven-volume report released Thursday, the Mass Casualty Commission also says the RCMP missed red flags in the years leading up to the Nova Scotia rampage on April 18-19, 2020, which left 22 people slain by a denture maker disguised as an RCMP officer and driving a replica police vehicle.

The assailant, Gabriel Wortman, was killed by two Mounties at a gas station in Enfield, Nova Scotia, 13 hours into his rampage. Disguised as a police officer, Wortman shot people in their homes and set fires in a killing spree across the Canadian province of Nova Scotia.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau called it one of the darkest chapters in Canadian history and said he hopes the report is one of the many steps toward ensuring a tragedy like that never happens again. Trudeau attended the report's release in Nova Scotia and said his government will examine it closely. "There is no question that



A memorial pays tribute to Royal Canadian Mounted Police Constable Heidi Stevenson, a mother of two and a 23-year veteran of the force, along the highway in Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

there needs to be changes and there will be," Trudeau said. Among other things, the commission says the national police force is badly disorganized. Its review of the RCMP's 5,000 pages of policies and procedures found the force's own members were unclear on proper responses to critical incidents and communication with the public.

The report delves deeply into the causes of the mass shooting.

These include the killer's violence toward his spouse and the failure of police to act on it, and "implicit bi-

ases" that seemed to blind officers and community members to the danger a white, male professional posed.

In response, the commissioners call for a future RCMP where the current 26-week model of training is scrapped as it's no longer sufficient for the complex demands of policing. The academy would be replaced with a three-year, degree-based model of education, as exists in Finland.

The document begins with an account of the police errors in the years before

the killings, and the events of April 18 and 19.

The report's summary says that soon after the shooting started in Portapique, Nova Scotia, RCMP commanders disregarded witness accounts, and senior Mounties wrongly assumed residents were mistaken when they reported seeing the killer driving a fully marked RCMP cruiser.

In addition, the report says police failed to promptly send out alerts to the public with a description of the killer until it was too late for some of his victims.

Having laid out a litany of

shortcomings, the inquiry calls for a fresh external review of the police force. It says the federal minister of public safety should then establish priorities for the RCMP, "retaining the tasks that are suitable to a federal policing agency, and identifying what responsibilities are better reassigned to other agencies."

"This may entail a reconfiguration of policing in Canada and a new approach to federal financial support for provincial and municipal policing services," the report says.

Michael Duheme, the interim RCMP commissioner, said he was "deeply sorry" for the pain and suffering endured by families of the victims. "I can't even imagine what you have endured," he said, adding that the RCMP "must learn and we are committed to do just that."

Dennis Daley, the head of the RCMP in Nova Scotia, said to the families that he knows that the response "wasn't what you needed to be. And for that I am deeply sorry."

The victims in Canada's worst mass shooting included an RCMP officer, a teacher, health-care workers, retirees, neighbors of the shooter and two correctional officers killed in their home. The rampage started when Wortman attacked his spouse. □

Associated Press

Netanyahu supporters block highway to support judicial plan

TEL AVIV, Israel (AP) —

Thousands of right-wing Israelis on Thursday blocked a main highway in Tel Aviv as they demonstrated in favor of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's plan to overhaul the country's judicial system.

The crowd was much smaller than the hundreds of thousands of people who have taken to the streets in recent months to demonstrate against the plan.

But the gathering had the same effect. Protesters honked their car horns and hoisted blue and white Israeli flags crippling traffic

along the Ayalon highway, the main north-south thoroughfare running through the coastal city.

After especially intense protests, Netanyahu this week froze the plan and began negotiations with his political opponents aimed at finding a compromise plan.

But his opponents have vowed to continue their protests as well.

The plan would give Netanyahu's parliamentary coalition control over judicial appointments and the power to overturn Supreme Court decisions it opposes.

Netanyahu and his allies say the plan is needed to rein a system unelected activist judges who wield too much power over political matters.

Opponents say the changes would destroy a system of checks and balances by concentrating too much power in the hands of Netanyahu and his allies in parliament.

They also say Netanyahu has a conflict of interest while he is on trial for criminal charges and has no business meddling in the country's legal system. □



Right-wing Israelis rally in support of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, seen in poster, and his government's plans to overhaul the judicial system, in Tel Aviv, Israel, Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Associated Press

Top U.N. court rejects Iranian bid to free assets frozen by U.S.

By **MIKE CORDER**

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The United Nations' top court on Thursday rejected Tehran's legal bid to free up some \$2 billion in Iranian central bank assets frozen by U.S. authorities to be paid in compensation to victims of a 1983 bombing in Lebanon and other attacks linked to Iran.

In a 10-5 majority ruling, the International Court of Justice said it did not have jurisdiction to rule on the Iranian claim linked to the central Markazi Bank. The world court's vice-president, Kirill Gevorgian, said the majority "upholds the objection to jurisdiction raised by the United States of America relating to the claims of the Islamic Republic of Iran" related to the bank. In a complex, 67-page judgment, the world court also found that some other U.S. moves to seize assets of Iran and Iranians in the United States breached a 1955 treaty between the countries and said they should negotiate compensation.

If they fail to reach a number, they will have to return to the Hague-based court for a ruling. But the largest part of the case focused on Bank Markazi, and its frozen assets of \$1.75 billion in bonds, plus accumulated interest, that are held in a Citibank account in New York. The court said that it did not have jurisdiction based on the 1955 Treaty of Amity because the protections it offers do not extend to central banks. Both countries largely voiced satisfaction at Thursday's decision.



Iran's agent Tavakol Habibzadeh, center, and delegation members wait for judges to enter the International Court of Justice, the United Nations' top court, which issued its judgment in a dispute between Iran and the United States over frozen Iranian state bank accounts worth some \$2 billion, in The Hague, Netherlands, Thursday, March 30, 2023.

Associated Press

Both countries largely voiced satisfaction at Thursday's decision.

In Washington, Deputy State Department spokesman Vedant Patel said that while the U.S. was disappointed with some aspects of the ruling it was pleased on the whole. "Broadly we believe that today's decision is a major blow to Iran's case," Patel

told journalists. It said Tehran would use "all diplomatic, legal and judiciary means" to pursue its demands. At hearings last year, Iran cast the asset freeze as an attempt to destabilize the Tehran government and a violation of international law. Iran took its claim to the world court in 2016 after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that money belonging to Iran's central bank could be used as compensation for the 241 American troops who died in the 1983 bombing, which was believed to be linked to Tehran. After the bombing of the a U.S. military base in Lebanon, a second blast nearby killed 58 French soldiers. Iran has denied involvement, but a U.S. District Court judge found Tehran responsible in 2003. The judge's ruling said Iran's ambassador to Syria at the time called "a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and instructed him to instigate the Marine barracks bombing." □

Report: Chinese state-sponsored hacking group highly active

By **DAVID RISING**

Associated Press

BANGKOK (AP) — A Chinese hacking group that is likely state-sponsored and has been linked previously to attacks on U.S. state government computers is still "highly active" and is focusing on a broad range of targets that may be of strategic interest to China's government and security services, a private American cybersecurity firm said in a new report Thursday. The hacking group, which the report calls RedGolf, shares such close overlap with groups tracked by other security companies under the names APT41 and

BARIUM that it is thought they are either the same or very closely affiliated, said Jon Condra, director of strategic and persistent threats for Insikt Group, the threat research division of Massachusetts-based cybersecurity company Recorded Future. Following up on previous reports of APT41 and BARIUM activities and monitoring the targets that were attacked, Insikt Group said it had identified a cluster of domains and infrastructure "highly likely used across multiple campaigns by RedGolf" over the past two years. "We believe this activity is likely being conducted for intelligence purposes rather than financial gain due to the overlaps with previously reported cyberespionage campaigns," Condra said in an emailed response to questions from The Associated Press.

China's Foreign Ministry denied the accusations, saying, "This company has produced false information on so-called 'Chinese hacker attacks' more than once in the past. Their relevant actions are groundless accusations, far fetched, and lack professionalism." Chinese authorities have consistently denied any form of state-sponsored hacking, instead saying China itself is a major target of cyberattacks. APT41 was implicated in a 2020 U.S. Justice Department indictment that accused Chinese hackers of targeting more than 100 companies and institutions in the U.S. and abroad, including social media and video game companies, universities and telecommunications providers. In its analysis, Insikt Group said it found evidence that RedGolf "remains highly

active" in a wide range of countries and industries, "targeting aviation, automotive, education, government, media, information technology and religious organizations." Insikt Group did not identify specific victims of RedGolf, but said it was able to track scanning and exploitation attempts targeting different sectors with a version of the KEYPLUG backdoor malware also used by APT41. Insikt said it had identified several other malicious tools used by RedGolf in addition to KEYPLUG, "all of which are commonly used by many Chinese state-sponsored threat groups." In 2022, the cybersecurity firm Mandiant reported that APT41 was responsible for breaches of the networks of at least six U.S. state governments, also using KEYPLUG. □



The flags of the U.S. and Chinese are displayed together on top of a trishaw in Beijing on Sept. 16, 2018.

Associated Press

National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches—a very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907



acres) of natural area, located at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet im-

pressive inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, ATV or 4x4 vehicle.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave. The bird drawing in the park logo is a copy of one of these historical artistic expressions.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the land. These families found ways to survive in the dif-

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ficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

For the management of the park, a dedicated foundation "Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok" (FPNA), known today as the Aruba National Park Foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding

area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under FPNA management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of species of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of FPNA. In 2019 management plans will be established for the new MPAs which include: coral reefs, sea grass beds, mangrove systems, a large diversity of breeding seabirds. Parke Marino Aruba also contains potential shark nursery areas, endangered sea turtle nesting beaches and marine mammal nursery areas. □



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No new permits for nor the transfer of UTV and ATV permits

The Minister of Transport, Mr. Ursell Arends, decided to stop granting new permits for UTVs and ATVs for public transport nor transferring existing UTVs and ATVs permits.

During the past years, there was a noticeable increase in Utility Task Vehicles (UTV) and All-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in Aruba, in particular by tour operators.

This increase affects negatively. UTVs and ATVs drastically increased the number of accidents with injuries and material damage. It is



also causing harm to our nature (flora, fauna, and geomorphologic properties), causing a nuisance of dust and sound and hinder-

ing the traffic flow.

To mitigate the negative impact of UTVs and ATVs on the community, nature, traffic safety, and traffic flow, the Minister decided not to grant new permits nor transfer existing vehicle permits for these vehicles.

Minister Arends based his decision on the task force's advice. The task force consists of DOW, DTP, DNM, DIP, DTI, KPA, DWJZ, DEZHI, and ATA representatives. The government formalized this decision in the Ministerial Order on March 16, 2023,



published in the National Gazette edition #7. This decision is part of the policy

aimed at better regulation of UTV/ATV and its negative impact. □

15 candidates graduated as customs officer Import Duties and Excises



ORANJESTAD - On March 24, 2023, the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Xiomara Maduro, attended the graduation ceremony of 15 newly graduated customs officers Import Duties and Excises.

The updated course started in 2021 and was no walk in the park. During 16 months, the Customs officers in training had to study and work under the guidance of experienced customs officers.

"Officers, you should be very proud of the certificate that you received since it does not only show that you completed the course but also shows your discipline, perseverance, sacrifice, and efforts," the Minister stated.

Customs Aruba now has 15 new Custom officers. As the economy of Aruba is

recovering, there is more investment and import of goods. The customs department must be better prepared to cope with the daily demands.

On behalf of the Government of Aruba, Minister Maduro wished the following customs officers the best in their careers:

Jean Britus;
Joskermin Comas Andujar;
Boutros Frangie;
Billiardo Galvis Lozano;
Le-Andro Kock;
Eileen Koolman;
Roland Lacle;
Kay-Shaun van der Linde;
Anthony Rasmijn;
Lishenco Scholtz;
Ariathne Tromp;
Cathline Wernet.

A special shout-out goes to the best graduates:

July Saenz Marin;
Victor Fingal;
Jeanny (Shani) Binda. □

Special donation to the youth library

Each package consists of a domino game, a memory game, and a quartet game. The images are the same ones published in the book *Mi buki di Aruba*. This book offers the Aruban children recognizable pictures in their own cultural context and environment.

The games offer images of various subjects like the food and habits of Aruba,

nature, and Aruba sceneries. The game ArubABC shows birds, fruits, trees, musical instruments, sites, and known monuments in Aruba. The material is very colorful and attractive. Children recognize the images and learn to read letters, words, or names.

Steffen Maas created these games specially for children learning to read.

These games can also be used by older children and in classrooms.

Besides publishing "Mi buki di Aruba," Steffen's goal is to develop additional material to complement the book, like group games, exercise books, and digital applications. as part of the education method.

The realization of the ABC



project was thanks to the subsidy received by the Prins Bernard Cultuurfonds Caribisch Gebied (PBCCG). The World Literacy Foundation also sup-

ports this project.

For more information about this project, please visit <https://www.abcbbooks.org/news>. □

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Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Divi Village Beach Resort

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently recognized the Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. Presenting the Ambassadors with the Goodwill certification as a token of appreciation. The Goodwill certification is granted to ambassadors to recognize, their loyalty, friendship, and visits to the island of Aruba.

Goodwill Honorees have been choosing Aruba as their preferred vacation destination for more than 20 years consecutively. The Honoring certification program has three levels, which are divided according to the number of consecutive years visiting the island.

Honoring Levels:

Distinguished Ambassadors: 10+ years
Goodwill Ambassadors: 20+ years
Emerald Ambassadors: 35+ years

Honorees were: Goodwill Ambassadors: 20+ years:

Michael & Charmaine Langlois are residents of Ontario, Canada (have been coming to Aruba for 20 years consecutively). Robert & Margaret Parks are residents of Connecticut, United States (have been coming to Aruba for 25 years consecutively).

Ms. Marouska Heyliger representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and members of the Aruba Marriott Surf Club bestowed the certification of the Goodwill Ambassador. The honorees were presented with the Goodwill Ambassador Certificate and memorable gifts.

On behalf of the Government of Aruba, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to Mr. & Mrs. Langlois and Mr. & Mrs. Parks for making Aruba their preferred vacation destination for so many years. We are so thankful to have had such wonderful visitors all these years! Aruba is unquestionably their home away from home!



The top reasons for returning to Aruba, provided by the honorees were:
Michael & Charmaine Langlois reasons:
The weather

Aruban people
Cleanliness
Getting together with family + friends
Dining, casinos, and experiences ☐



Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Kevin and Lisa from Toronto, Canada**, who say it's their first time on the island and so far, they love the beach! Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

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Today Is Going To Be A Good Day

Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls

The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by

the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whip-tail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just

some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.arubanationalpark.org

The Lighthouse

No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy



the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to

miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook. □



Thayisa Farro:**“Dancing has and continues to bring joy in my life”**

(Oranjestad)—Thayisa Zieryani Farro is a young adult who has been, since very young, active in different hobbies. As an adult and currently working as a tax advisor, she still participates in activities and continues to practice her hobbies. In a special interview with our Aruba Today, she shares her life story, her hobbies and how she hopes to continue to be active for many more years to come.

BDA: Tell us a bit about yourself and your childhood.

Farro: “Aside from school, I had a very active childhood, where I had taken dance lessons, cuatro lessons, ping-pong and drawing lessons. Out of all these activities, it was dancing that I loved the most. After I finished primary school, I attended Colegio Arubano secondary school and at that time I knew that if I didn't finish home work or finish studying, I would not be allowed to go to dance lessons, no matter how much I cried and begged.

Besides these things, I spent a long time with family, especially my sibling and cousins. We spent a lot of hours playing outside, going to the beach, riding bikes and playing ball games. It was a fun time.”

BDA: How old were you

when you started in the dance world? And why did you choose dancing?

Farro: “I started ballet lessons at 4 years old at Simadanza with Miss Ina Profet. My mom put me in these lessons, because she never had the opportunity herself to do this. I ended up loving ballet after a few lessons. From there my love for dancing grew. Besides the lessons at Simadanza, I also danced with Pierewietje, with Miss Martha Figueroa. When I turned 10 years old, I started folklore lessons with Miss Astrid Salazar from Simadanza. I slowly started participating in more dance lessons at Simadanza, including jazz-ballet, modern dance, street dance and tap dance.

When I went to study abroad, I took some dance lessons too. When I came back to the island, I went back to Simadanza. Now, as an adult, I participated in a few lessons at ArubaSalsa with Miss Melitza Bermudez and I'm currently dancing with Kids and Youth in Action.”

BDA: What did you study?

Farro: “When I was younger, I always wanted to be a dentist. When I finished secondary school, I was drawn out to study dentistry in The Netherlands. During this time, I went to Belgium to study biomedical sciences y obstetrics with

the thought that I would be able to study dentistry later. Unfortunately, I was never chosen by the university. After 2 years, I returned to Aruba. This is when I was advised to study Law at the University of Aruba, because it was a very broad study. After I finished my Bachelor of Law, I did my Masters in Taxes at the University of Aruba and Maastricht; totally different from dentistry, but still a study that taught me a lot about our rights on the island.”

BDA: Do you feel that dancing made you the person that you are today?

Farro: “Looking back, I feel that dancing helped me become disciplined, determined and responsible. Dancing taught me to prioritize my time so I can finish my other obligations from school or work before I can dedicate it to dancing. It's also a time where I can be creative and challenge myself so I can master a certain dance or choreography.”

BDA: you still dance. Is it something you see yourself doing for a long time?

Farro: “I sure hope so! Dancing has and continues to bring joy in my life. I got to know a lot of people through dancing and I'll always have an admiration for them. During dance lessons, we would always laugh and have a great time. It's a time where the stresses of everyday life disappear. Dancing has also been proved to reduce the risks for certain chronic illnesses, like dementia. For this reason, I wish to be dancing for many more years, so I can keep the mind and body strong and healthy.”

BDA: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Farro: In 10 years, I hope to still be dancing and be active in the dance and sports world. I hope to be in good health, spending more time with family and friends, and using my life experiences to help and inspire others.” □



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

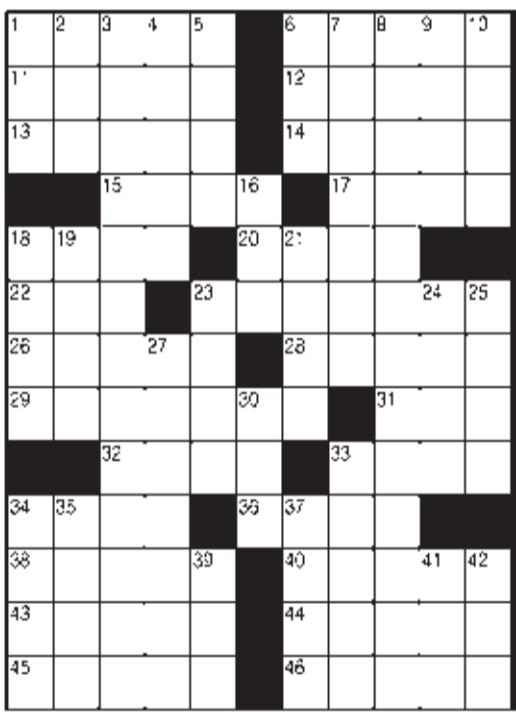
ACROSS 45 Thus
1 Moses of the track
6 Story with a point

DOWN
11 Long attack
12 Close, as a port
13 Elite Navy group
14 Thou
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17 Metal sources
18 To boot
20 Spiders' creations
22 Pay stub line
23 Sailing event
26 Western resort lake
28 Different
29 Genus sub-division
31 Avenue tree
32 Euro division
33 With skill
34 Rooney of "Carol"
36 Cain's brother
38 Unaccompanied
40 Japanese port
43 Namely
44 Half of humanity



Yesterday's answer

18 Hill builders
19 Spring
21 They may clash
23 Horse halter
24 Spill the beans
25 Base group
27 Maritime
30 Seventh letter
33 Man of morals
34 School subject
35 Balm ingredient
37 Gift toppers
39 Simone's season
41 Film-maker Burns
42 What's more



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-31 CRYPTOQUOTE

GEBCQYX OC'DD UMTQ MP, PNC

KYMTAEO VETTCVPMET, PNC

DESCKG, PNC QKCYBCKG YTG

BC, — JCKBMP PNC UKEL

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WOULD SOMEONE PLEASE GET THIS BIG WALKING CARPET OUT OF MY WAY? — PRINCESS LEIA, "STAR WARS"

In Your Debt: Doing the bare minimum with debt can cost you

By SARA RATHNER of Nerd-Wallet

When you're carrying a credit card balance, paying at least the minimum due each month is certainly a start. If those payments aren't making your overall budget feel squeezed, you have all the more reason to put payments on autopilot and not think about the total cost of your debt. "Our pace of life has gotten really busy," says Delia Fernandez, a certified financial planner and the founder and president of Fernandez Financial Advisory LLC in Los Alamitos, California. "There's always something that's more important, particularly for these people who are not in a financial crisis." But that inertia can cost you, especially with average credit card interest rates reaching 20.4% as of November 2022, according to the Federal Reserve. NerdWallet's 2022 American Household Credit Card Debt Study, conducted by Harris Poll, found that U.S. households



The Visa logo is seen on a credit card in New Orleans, Aug. 11, 2019.

Associated Press

with revolving credit card debt are paying an average of \$1,380 in interest this year. There is good news, though: Dedicated even a small amount of time and money to changing up your payment habits can be well worth the effort.

CONSIDER THE TOTAL NOT MONTHLY COST OF INTEREST

While the slow drip of interest payments might feel manageable month to month, thinking of your debt this way ignores how

much interest adds up over time.

"If you're only able to make minimum payments and you're paying the average interest rate, it could cost you thousands over many, many years if you're paying down a balance of \$10,000," says Bruce McClary, senior vice president of membership and communications at the National Foundation for Credit Counseling.

"It's stunning how much it could cost you." □

Alibaba to split itself into 6 business groups



The logo of Chinese technology firm Alibaba is seen at its office in Beijing, Tuesday, Aug. 10, 2021.

Associated Press

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Alibaba is splitting itself into six business groups as the Chinese e-commerce company attempts to become more nimble in reacting to changes in the market and increase the value of those units.

Shares of Alibaba Group Holding Ltd. jumped 8% at the opening bell.

The company said that each group will be able to raise outside capital and potentially seek its own initial public offering, except for Taobao Tmall Business Group, which will stay wholly-owned by Alibaba Group. Each group will be independently managed by its own CEO and board of directors. The Cloud Intelligence Group includes cloud. □

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24/7

Has T. rex lost its bite? Menacing snarl may be wrong



This illustration provided by Mark P. Witton in March 2023 depicts two principal models of predatory dinosaur facial appearance: crocodilian-like lipless jaws, or a lizard-like lippered mouth.

Associated Press

By MADDIE BURAKOFF
AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Tyrannosaurus rex is often shown baring massive, sharp teeth, like the ferocious creature in “Jurassic Park.” But new research suggests that this classic image might be wrong. The teeth on T. rex and other big theropods were likely covered by scaly lips, concludes a study published Thursday in the journal Science. The dinosaur’s teeth didn’t stick out when its mouth was closed, and even in a wide open bite, you might just see the tips, the scientists found.

The research is the latest in a long back-and-forth over how dinosaur mouths really looked.

Recent depictions show big teeth jutting out of the dinosaurs’ jaws, even when closed. Some thought the predators’ teeth were just too big to fit in their mouths, said study author Thomas Cullen, a paleontologist at Auburn University in Alabama.

When researchers compared skulls from dinosaurs and living reptiles, though, they found this wasn’t the case. Some large monitor lizards actually have bigger teeth than T. rex compared to their skull size, and can still fit them under a set of scaly lips, Cullen said.

The scientists also found clues in the pattern of wear and tear on tooth surfaces. For a creature like a crocodile, whose teeth stick out of its mouth, the exposed part gets worn down quickly “like someone’s taken a sander to the side of the tooth,” said another study author Mark Witton, a paleoartist at England’s University of Portsmouth.

But when researchers analyzed a tooth from a Daspletosaurus, a T. rex relative, they found it was in good condition and it didn’t show that uneven damage pattern.

With this evidence and other clues from the dinosaurs’ anatomy, the study makes a good case for lippered ty-

rannosaurs, said University of Maryland paleontologist Thomas Holtz, who was not involved with the study. Still, “we’re not talking kissy lips,” he pointed out they’d be thin and scaly like those of the Komodo dragon, a large lizard.

It’s not the first time our depictions of dinosaurs have been called into question: Other research has shown that T. rex was more hunched over than

we used to think, and that fierce velociraptors probably sported feathers. Most of what we know about dinosaurs comes from their bones, but it can be harder to get clear answers about soft tissues like skin, which usually aren’t preserved as fossils. □



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CNN preaches patience as ratings tank during turnaround

By DAVID BAUDER

AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — CNN's leadership is preaching patience even though thousands of viewers are abandoning the network during its attempted turnaround, with no indication yet whether it will be rewarded.

Cable news ratings are down across the board compared to 2022, when Russia's invasion of Ukraine was fresh in the news. CNN's dip is most dramatic — 61% in prime time in March, with Fox News Channel down 27% and MSNBC off by 12%, according to the Nielsen company.

Fox averaged 2.09 million viewers in prime time in March, with MSNBC at 1.14 million and CNN at 473,000, Nielsen said. In the key 25-54 age demographic for advertisers, CNN is seeing some of its lowest numbers in decades.

CNN is a year into new corporate management with Warner Bros. Discovery, which hired ex-CBS producer Chris Licht to run the network. The chief goal has been to rebuild trust as a non-partisan news brand after years of criticism by former President Donald Trump and his followers, at a time Fox and MSNBC have profited handsomely by appealing to specific points of view.



The CNN logo is displayed at the entrance to the CNN Center in Atlanta on Feb. 2, 2022.

Associated Press

Licht's biggest programming move to date, a revamp of "CNN This Morning," hasn't borne fruit in the ratings and has been beset by bad publicity, including co-host Don Lemon's ham-fisted reference to a woman's prime years. Changes to CNN's daytime look are imminent. Licht's vision for prime time is months away, though, and only beginning to take shape. His plans are to couple news coverage with hosts from different worlds, including entertainment, who can talk about the news without a specific partisan take. Licht is exploring several possibilities,

and CNN is reportedly close to deals with CBS' Gayle King and former NBA star turned sportscaster Charles Barkley for shows that will air once a week, although the network wouldn't confirm that. If Licht's bet pays off, CNN will strengthen its reputation as a news brand while also attracting viewers who are now watching Netflix or HGTV not just competing news networks. As those plans develop, CNN's prime-time lineup has largely been in flux after Anderson Cooper's hour at 8 p.m. Eastern. The network has experimented with some interviews, events and subject-focused hours

at 9 p.m. Eastern. They include talks with first lady Jill Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and town halls with Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin and one focused on the Ohio train derailment.

The news hours that follow, at least for now, are led by Alisyn Camerota and Laura Coates.

"Viewers are a bit confused with all of the changes, particularly in the prime-time lineup," said Jennifer Thomas, a former CNN producer who now teaches journalism at Howard University. She said CNN needs more news that impacts viewers and less analysis.

CNN expresses pride in some of the efforts, while admitting some are duds. Last Friday, for example, only 295,000 people watched Jake Tapper's interview with "Ted Lasso" star Jason Sudeikis. It was less than a quarter of the people who saw Alex Wagner's MSNBC show at the same 9 p.m. Eastern time slot, Nielsen said.

David Zaslav, president and CEO of Warner Bros. Discovery, delivered a pep talk to hundreds of CNN managers earlier this month to reinforce the message that he wanted to see a network focused on the news that didn't lean any way politically.

CNN saw strong ratings under the leadership of Licht's predecessor, Jeff Zucker, and Zaslav said he recognized that a more partisan approach could bring more viewers and money, but that "it's not what I came here to do," according to a transcript of Zaslav's speech.

He said he hoped the network would be able to figure out what is working and what isn't.

He urged the managers to not worry about outside noise.

"Ratings be damned," he said. "Let's focus on who we are. This is our mission. This is our legacy. And this is our journey together." □

Melissa Joan Hart says she helped 'tiny kids' flee shooting

By LISA BAUMANN

Associated Press

Actor Melissa Joan Hart said she and her husband helped a class of kindergartners that was fleeing the Nashville school shooting earlier this week.

Hart said in a video posted on Instagram Tuesday that her children attend a school next to the private Christian Covenant School. She said she and her husband had been headed to her kids' school conferences Monday when they helped some students get away from the shooting that killed six people.

"We helped a class of kindergartners across a busy highway," she said, her voice breaking, "that were climbing out of the woods that were trying to, um, escape the shooter situation at their school. So we helped all these tiny little kids cross the road and get their teachers over there, and we helped a mom reunite with her children."

Hart said she had moved to Nashville from Connecticut and that her kids had attended a school near Sandy Hook Elementary when 26 children were shot and killed there in 2012.

"This is our second experience with a school shooting with our kids being in close proximity. Luckily we are all OK," she said.

She said she recorded the video Monday, but it was too raw to post that day.

"I don't know what to say anymore," she said. "Enough is enough."

A spokesperson for Hart, who has starred in sitcoms including "Sabrina the Teenage Witch," didn't immediately return a message from The Associated Press seeking further comment. □



In this Nov. 5, 2018 file photo, Melissa Joan Hart arrives at the Los Angeles premiere of "Ralph Breaks the Internet."

Associated Press

Iowa's Caitlin Clark wins AP Player of the Year

By DOUG FEINBERG
AP Basketball Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Caitlin Clark has put together one of the greatest individual seasons in NCAA history with eye-popping offensive numbers.

Iowa's junior guard, though, saved her best performance for the game's biggest stage, recording the first 40-point triple-double in NCAA history to get Iowa to the Final Four for the first time in 30 years.

Clark was honored Thursday as The Associated Press women's basketball Player of the Year. She received 20 votes from the 28-member national media panel that votes on the AP Top 25 each week. Voting was done before March Madness began.

"It's a huge honor," Clark said. "I picked a place that I perfectly fit into and that's allowed me to show my skill set. I'd be lying if I said it didn't mean something. It's not the reason you play basketball, it's just something that comes along with getting to do what you love."



Associated Press Sports Products Director Barry Bedlan is flanked by Indiana head coach Teri Moren and Iowa's Caitlin Clark at a press conference after both was introduced as the AP Coach of the Year and AP Player of the Year Thursday, March 30, 2023, in Dallas.

Associated Press

The Iowa coaching staff surprised Clark by sharing that she won the award while they were visiting the Iowa Children's Hospital — a place near and dear to her. It also has huge ties to the Hawkeyes athletic department.

They put together a video

of some of the children in the hospital congratulating Clark on an outstanding season, and in the middle of it, Iowa coach Lisa Bluder popped on the screen to tell her she won.

"I'm there for inspiring the next generation and being there for the people

that you know are going through a hard time," said Clark, who grew up in Iowa. "Being able to give joy to people that watch you play and watch your team play is amazing."

She averaged 27.0 points, 8.3 assists and 7.5 rebounds during the season to help

Iowa go 26-6. Clark has 984 points, the sixth-most in a season by any player in Division I women's history. She also has over 300 assists.

"She is spectacular. I don't know how else to describe what she does on the basketball court," Bluder said. Clark accepted the award in front of her Hawkeye teammates. One of whom asked Clark who were favorite teammate was and the point guard deftly sidestepped it by saying that they "all were here favorite."

Next up for the Hawkeyes is undefeated South Carolina in the national semifinals. The Gamecocks are led by Aliyah Boston, last season's winner of the award. She garnered the other eight votes this season.

"There's so many great players, more than just me and (Aliyah)," Clark told the AP. "You can go on and on and list the tremendous players. I think that's really good for our game when there's a lot of great players. That's what is going to help this game grow more than anything else." □

Pickleball Slam: Roddick, Agassi, McEnroe, Chang take swings

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP National Writer

When Andy Roddick agreed to join John McEnroe, Andre Agassi and Michael Chang at the Pickleball Slam, the 2003 U.S. Open champion figured he had two distinct advantages against the three other International Tennis Hall of Fame inductees participating in the made-for-TV exhibition in Hollywood, Florida. At age 40, Roddick is the junior member of the quartet (McEnroe is 64, Agassi 52, Chang 51). And Roddick's serve, which topped 150 mph back in his days on the tennis tour, was the fastest among the group of retired Grand Slam title winners who signed up for something that features a \$1 million purse and airs Sunday on ESPN at noon Eastern, before the March Madness women's championship game.

"As I'm walking through the (pickleball) rules, I saw they took away my youth with (limited) movement, and they took away my serve with having to serve underhand," Roddick said with a chuckle, "so I'm not really sure what's left."

He will face Chang, then McEnroe will take on Agassi, before a McEnroe-Chang vs. Agassi-Roddick doubles competition at the Pickleball Slam the latest in a series of attempts to draw eyeballs to a sport taking over courts in neighborhoods all over while still finding its footing on television.

"Everyone likes it instantly. It's pretty well-regarded by people that play it," Roddick said. "But you also don't know if it will ever translate to TV and be a very watchable product without knowing the ins and outs and nuances

that, frankly, I don't know that people have the time to learn." ESPN/ABC have shown pickleball in the past, there is a deal in place with one league for some of its competitions, and there are ongoing discussions with others.

"We're obviously not writing big checks for pickleball at this moment," said Tim Bunnell, ESPN senior vice president of programming. "The stage of development for the sport is: We're all still figuring out how it translates in the media world. We know how it translates participation-wise."

Horizon Sports & Experiences (HS&E) is producing the Pickleball Slam in tandem with InsideOut Sports and Entertainment (ISE). The idea, HS&E co-CEO David Levy explained, was for bold-faced names from one racket sport to help promote another.

"Today, right now, nobody truly knows the top pickleball players. No one can even name maybe the top 50 pickleball players," said Levy, the former president of Turner Networks. "(But) it's a huge rising phenomenon in sport. And we decided to jump in, in a unique

way." Likening the appeal of Sunday's event to what drew fans to "The Match," a televised golf exhibition that began under his watch at Turner with Tiger Woods playing against Phil Mickelson in 2018, Levy said: "I've done this magic before." □



Andy Roddick returns a shot to Italy's Fabio Fognini in the third round of play at the 2012 US Open tennis tournament, Sept. 2, 2012, in New York.

Associated Press



Baltimore Orioles' Adley Rutschman watches the flight of his RBI single in the seventh inning of an opening day baseball game against the Boston Red Sox at Fenway Park, Thursday, March 30, 2023, in Boston.

Associated Press

By KYLE HIGHTOWER
AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Adley Rutschman became the first catcher in major league history with five hits on opening day, and the Baltimore Orioles survived a wild ninth inning to beat the Boston Red Sox 10-9 on Thursday.

Playing in his first season opener after starring for the Orioles as a rookie last year, Rutschman homered in

his first at-bat and finished 5-for-5 with a career-best four RBIs and a walk on a chilly day at Fenway Park, with temperature of 38 degrees at first pitch.

Ramon Urias hit a two-run homer for Baltimore, which finished with 15 hits, nine walks and five stolen bases. Kyle Gibson (1-0) allowed four runs and six hits over five-plus innings to earn his first opening-day victory since his 2021 All-Star

season with Texas. Gibson gave up an RBI groundout in the first inning before retiring nine straight Red Sox hitters. The Orioles nearly gave away the game in the ninth.

With Baltimore leading 10-7, closer Félix Bautista walked pinch-hitter Raimel Tapia. Alex Verdugo followed with a single and advanced to second on an error by center fielder Cedric Mullins.

Rafael Devers struck out.

Rutschman has 5 hits in opener, Orioles outlast Red Sox 10-9 Associated Press

Justin Turner then reached on an infield single to third when Urias' throw was wide, scoring Tapia. Masataka Yoshida grounded to shortstop Jorge Mateo, who stepped on second for the force but threw wildly to first, allowing Verdugo to score.

Bautista struck out Adam Duvall on three pitches to end it and earn the save.

The Orioles scored four runs in the fourth and three in the fifth to take an 8-2 lead. Baltimore led 10-4 before Bryan Baker allowed three runs in the eighth to give the Red Sox some hope.

Boston offseason addition and two-time Cy Young Award winner Corey Kluber (0-1) struggled in his Fenway debut, surrendering five runs on six hits and four walks in 3 1/3 innings.

Alex Cora dropped to 0-5 in opening-day games as Boston's manager.

TRAINER'S ROOM

Red Sox: Arroyo stayed in the game after taking an inadvertent cleat to the side of his head in the second inning. Arroyo was ap-

plying a tag to Rutschman at second base as he attempted to stretch out a single. Rutschman's leg flipped over as he slid awkwardly. ... LHP James Paxton was placed on the 15-day injured list (retroactive to March 27) with a strained right hamstring.

GOOD COMPANY

Rutschman, one of six Baltimore players making his first opening-day appearance, became the youngest Oriole to homer in his first opening-day at-bat since Cal Ripken Jr. in 1984.

FINAL SPOTS

Right-hander Kaleb Ort and Tapia earned Boston's final two roster spots to open the season. Tapia got the nod over Jarren Duran, who was sent down to Triple-A Worcester. Ort pitched a scoreless sixth with one strikeout Thursday.

UP NEXT

Orioles: RHP Dean Kremer will make his sixth career start against Boston when the three-game series resumes on Saturday. In 11 road starts last season, he went 5-3 with a 3.63 ERA. □

Cubs' Marcus Stroman commits MLB's 1st pitch-clock violation

By JAY COHEN
AP Baseball Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago Cubs right-hander Marcus Stroman committed Major League Baseball's first pitch-clock violation in the third inning of Thursday's opening day game against the Milwaukee Brewers. With no outs, rookie Brice Turang on second base and Christian Yelich at the plate, plate umpire Ron Kulpa called the violation on Stroman at Wrigley Field. Kulpa pointed to his wrist in announcing the call, and the automatic ball made it a 2-2 count against Yelich. Several more violations followed on the first day of regular season games since MLB introduced a slate of rules changes this season including a timer for a sport

that famously existed for decades without a clock.

J.D. Davis of the San Francisco Giants became the first hitter called for a timer violation in the ninth inning of a game at Yankee Stadium. Davis took too long getting into the box to begin an at-bat against Ron Marinaccio, prompting plate ump Laz Diaz to penalize him with an automatic strike. Davis went on to strike out.

A few minutes later, Atlanta Braves reliever Collin McHugh put his arms out wide after being called for a violation by umpire Dan Bellino in the eighth inning against Washington. That put batter Jeimer Candelario ahead 1-0, and McHugh followed up with three more balls a three-

pitch walk, essentially.

MLB introduced the pitch clock this season to speed the pace of play. Players have 30 seconds to resume play between batters. Between pitches, pitchers have 15 seconds with nobody on and 20 seconds if there is a baserunner. Batters must be in the box and alert to the pitcher with at least eight seconds on the clock.

When a pitcher fails to throw a pitch in time, the penalty is an automatic ball.

When a batter isn't ready in time, it's an automatic strike.

San Diego Padres star Manny Machado committed the first pitch-clock violation during spring training. Players were overwhelm-

ingly encouraged by the new rules rollout during the preseason, when the average time of games fell 26 minutes to 2 hours, 35 minutes over the first three weeks.

Other changes this year include bigger bases to improve player safety, plus limits on infield shifts and pitcher disengagements to encourage more action. □



Chicago Cubs starting pitcher Marcus Stroman throws during the first inning of a baseball game against the Milwaukee Brewers Thursday, March 30, 2023, in Chicago.

Associated Press